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ACTION REPORT

USS PC-815

SERIAL 167 24 MAY 1943

ANTI-SUBMARINE ACTION BY SURFACE SHIP, REPORT OF:

FORWARDS REPORT OF ACTION AND VARIOUS OTHER REPORTS AND STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE CREW, COVERING ACTION OF 19-21 MAY 1943 WHILE EN ROUTE FROM ASTORIA TO SAN DIEGO FOR SHAKE DOWN CRUISE — FIRST CONTACT AT 0344 LCT IN LAT. 45.28 N, LONG. 124.20 W. (C.O. LT. L. RON HUBBARD, USNR).

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IN REPLY REFER TO NO.

PC815/A16-3
(167)

U. S. S. PC-815

SECRET

c/o Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, California,
May 24, 1943.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander in Chief, PACIFIC Fleet.

Via : (1) The Commanding Officer, Naval Station, Astoria, Oregon.
(2) The Commander, NORTHWEST Sea Frontier.

Subject: Battle Report - submission of.

Enclosures:
(A) Battle Report. - p.2
(B) Chart of Area Marked With Attacks. - missing
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1. The Battle Report for the action which took place May 19-21, 1943 is respectfully submitted herewith.

L. RON HUBBARD.

Copy to:
CO NAVSTA., Astoria, Oregon
COMNOWESTSEAFRON

1.

# SECRET

IN REPLY REFER
TO NO.

## U. S. S. PC-815

### AN ACCOUNT OF THE ACTION OFF CAPE LOOKOUT

Acting under the orders of the Commander of Operational Training Command, Pacific Fleet, 161909 of May, the U.S.S. PC815 got under weigh from Astoria at 2116 May 18, 1943 enroute to San Diego, California to undergo Shakedown.

At the time of departure this vessel was reasonably ready for action, officers and crew having been constantly drilled and taught since January 20, 1943 at which time, with a few exceptions, the complement had reported to Portland, Oregon for duty in connection with fitting out and construction.

Proceeding southward just inside the steamer track an echo ranging contact was made by the soundman then on duty, Grover, H.N., Soundman third class. The Commanding Officer had the conn and immediately slowed all engines to ahead one third to better echo ranging conditions, and placed the contact dead ahead, 500 yards away.

The first contact was very good. The target was moving left and away. The bearing was clear. The night was moonlit and the sea was flat calm. No ships of any kind were in sight or expected. Screw noises, fluttering and without pulsation, were distinct on the bearing and quite different from the pulsations of our own screws. The extent of bearing was about eighteen degrees with the mushiness of a wake to the right. The U.S.S. PC815 closed in to 360 yards, meanwhile sounding general quarters. Depth charge levers on the signal bridge were not used because contact was lost at 360 yards.

The range was quickly opened out and a search made of the area with echo ranging equipment. Contact was regained at 800 yards and was held on the starboard beam while further investigation was made. Screws were present and distinct as before. The bearing was still clear. Smoke signal identification was watched for closely and when none appeared it was concluded that the target must not be a friendly submarine. All engines were brought up to speed, fifteen knots and the target was brought dead ahead with ship on course 240 T.

Encl (A)

The target turned away and a lead angle was applied at which time the movement of the target was ascertained. The ship swung back to an intercepting course, crossed over the target ahead of it and laid the first barrage. Structural firing charges were in the K-guns and did not explode. The three charges rolled exploded at their settings two for 100 feet one for fifty feet. The contact was lost at 100 yards indicating a target depth of 100 feet.

Attack I concluded (see chart and chemical recorder trace) the range was opened well out on standard procedure and closed again on the side toward which the target had been turning. The depth charge boil was easily ranged upon but up to 800 yards but difficulty was experienced in picking up the actual target. When screw noises and the metallic quality of the contact reestablished contact, the ship came up to attack speed and made a run. The target was found to be turning back toward the depth charge distmnbance. Contact was lost at 200 yards indicating that the target had dived. A four charge pattern was laid, two from the racks set at 200 feet, two from the K-guns set at 150 feet. The time of this attack was 0332.

Using standard procedure a relocation of the target was accomplished and the target again developed for screws, target width doppler and change of bearing. The ship, sleepy and skeptical had come to their guns swiftly and without error. No one, including the Commanding Officer could readily credit the existence of an enemy submarine here on the steamer track and all soundmen, now on the bridge, were attempting to argue the echo ranging equipment and chemical recorder out of such a fantastic idea. Testing and evaluating the contact, the ship swept back and forth, keeping the contact in range on either bow and beam. Sound conditions were good and there was not any great interference.

N.B.

When the Commanding Officer and the soundmen had finally completed investigation, a third attack was made. A run of 700 yards at attack speed was compliasted by the failure of the chemical recprder. Stop watch range rates were being kept and it was found that the attack was a quarter attack with a rate of eight knots. Due to the rapid exhaustion of charges, only two were used with settings of 200 feet.

Standard procedure failed to regain contact. Circling

3.

area with a sharp lookout. At 0450, with dawn breaking over a glassy sea, a lookout sighted a dark object about 700 yards from the ship on the starboard beam. When inspected the object seemed to be moving. No definite conclusion could be reached as to the identity of the object and the range was closed. Although very probably this object was a floating log no chances were taken and the target was used to test the guns which had not been heretofore fired structurally. The gunners, most of whom were men of experience, displayed an astonishing accuracy, bursts and shells converging on the target.

The target disappeared for several minutes and then, to test guns not brought to bear on the first burst, the ship was turned in case the object reappeared. The object appeared again closed to the ship. Once more fire was opened and the target vanished.

It is stressed that no conclusion was reached by the Commanding Officer concerning this target and it is thought likely that it was merely drift. The effect upon morale was good and the ship was now assured that its newly installed guns could work if needed.

Only three depth charges were now left to the ship. The chemical recorder was being repaired by the sound technician. The next three attacks were therefore parsimonious.

N.D. The fourth, fifth and sixth attacks were made in rapid succession with an eye to harrass the submarine into surfacing where it could be worked upon with the guns.

The fourth attack was started from a range of 800 yards. This was a beam attack turning into a quarter (right moving) attack. The range rate was eleven knots when the quarter of the turning submarine was targeted. Suspecting an entire reversement of the submarine course, the ship used slightly opposite lead angle and then shifted rudder to lay the charge ahead and to the left of the submarine, setting 150 feet. The contact was maintained throughout all but one hundred yards of the run and was regained quickly, the submarine cutting back and toward the explosion point.

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Having maintained contact, the ship swerved back widely immediately after the depth charge explosion and six minutes later laid its next charge, having started its run from 600 yards. The submarine evidently attempted to turn in toward the ship for the range rate jumped from a bow to a head on attack in a very short distance. The one charge, set at 150 feet, was fired early to anticipate the advance. This charge, however, missed by a good seventy-five yards owing to the continued turning and speeding up of the submarine, as established by quickly regained contact. Screw noises were very loud.

A standard sweep was used to lengthen the range and a 1200 yard run was attempted but it was discovered owing to the depth (about 96 fathoms or slightly less) or to some other sound condition that contact at this distance was difficult to maintain. The range was closed back to 900 when good contact was regained. The target was drawing right. The range rate was about twelve knots at first. The submarine turned during the run and the range rate dropped to about eight knots with the submarine's wake interferring considerably in the operation. One charge was fired with a setting of 150 feet. This was our last charge.

Since our first establishment of the target as a submarine we had been sending for help and ammunition. No reply was given us from anyone except "Roger". As "Roger" could not be rolled off our racks the ship was forced to maintain contact as best it could and hope for reinforcements. Sound conditions began to grow poor.

At 0906 (see radio log) two U.S.N. anti-submarine blimps appeared, K-39 and K-33. While we held contact they investigated and announced to us that they had a magnetic contact where we were holding a sound contact. We tried to conn them into a run but their conception of distance below them was often in error as much as 500 yards. They continually confirmed our bearings.

At 1306 SC536 was sighted and was immediately informed of the situation. The USS PC815 regained contact at 900 yards and took SC536 astern of her. With the bullnose of the SC nearly against our flagstaff we came to attack course, instructing the SC to lay her pattern on a signal from our whistle. Attacking due north we found the submarine had been lying to. It started off and we heard screw noises. Target width at 500 was about 15 degrees

Target gave off screw noises for a moment and then screw noises ceased. The attack was made, therefore, without lead angle. Allowance was made for the distance between the PC projector of the sound head and the racks of the SC. The whistle was blown and a five charge pattern was laid.

The general conduct of the SC535 is here remarked upon. Her sound gear, WEA 1 was not in good operating condition and Lieutenant (jg) Kroepke, USNR, then in command (her assigned commanding officer did not arrive until several hours after the last attack of the last day) showed brilliant judgment and seamanship. The lag between blowing the whistle and his laying of the pattern was not more than four seconds and all charges exploded. Lieutenant (jg) Kroepke executed all orders with promptness and efficiency during formation steaming to sweep the area later in the attacks as well as in laying his charges at our command.

Attention is invited to the radio logs of this period, from 1330 LWT to 1900 LWT. The observation blimps began to sight oil and air bubbles in the vicinity of the last attack and finally a periscope. This ship also sighted air bubbles.

At 1600 the eighth attack was made, again by taking the SC536 astern and bringing her over the target and signaling as before. The target was now very deep and charges were set on maximum settings. The depth of the water in the vicinity of these attacks was now about 90 fathoms. The target was moving right at about three knots. Two charges were dropped.

At 1606 oil was reported again and this ship saw oil. Great air boils were seen and the sound of blowing tanks was reported by the soundman.

During the action so far guns were all in a condition of readiness and at least one watch, Condition Two, on duty with the 40MM always bearing and the 3" usually. All guns were now manned with great attention as it was supposed that the sub was trying to surface. Everyone was very calm, gunners joking about who would get in the first shot.

At 1631, using the listening head (JK) to locate his target, the soundman on duty, Beers, P.A. SoM3/c established definite contact, the SC was brought astern once more and and a run was made. The chemical recorder was again in operation. (See chemical recorder Trace for this, the Ninth Attack).

The target was still blowing tanks and the water around it disturbed by air bubbles. Two charges set for 200 feet were laid by the SC on our whistle signal.

About two hours earlier Beers, (above), had discovered a matter of interest by accident. Beers proved himself throughout to be an extraordinarily sensitive and interested soundman with great operational ability and was at the stack on nearly all runs while Welch, the sound technician (Welch, Lonnie, SoM2/c) operated the recorder and kept the equipment in a high state of repair/.

Beers had located a second contact. All our operation was on relative bearings due to a failure at the yard to install a gyro repeater in our sound stack. The steersman neglected to bring Beers ninety degrees right when the ship was turned and Beers found himself pinging on a moving target with screws when he had thought his target was blowing air and lying still. The Commanding Officer saw the difficulty and immediately remedied the train of the sound head. Returning to the first target which was motionless Beers examined it and found it to be as before. He then examined the new target, or contact, and found it to be drawing away at a speed of four knots. The extent of bearing was about nine degrees and the range 420 yards. Opening doppler.

When the ninth attack was concluded more blowing was heard and pil was seen coming to the surface and spreading.

Contact was sought on the new target but could not immediately be regained.

At 1646 the Coast Guard patrol boat 78302 came alongside with 23 depth charges and needed equipment for them. Within seven minutes all charges were transferred and within nine minutes two were in our racks, set to be dropped. In twenty-three minutes all charges were ready. This is remarked as a gauge of the reponse of the PC's crew.

While lying to, taking on these charges, echo ranging

was heard upon us. We were listening with the JK head and when we had located the source, the bearing was found to be clear. All other sources either had not arrived or could not operate sound gear.

N.B. About noon the Commanding Officer had concluded that the submarine under attack was unable to launch torpedos for the sea was smooth and the PC was an excellent target. Accordingly, lying to occasioned no great concern.

When the QC head was directed toward the source of this pinging and the chemical recorder turned on, no reception was noted and our pings were all that registered upon the trace. We were still in the water and the trace showed a range rate (see photostat of trace). Contact passed within 150 yards of our bows, from starboard to port.

At 1748, (see radio logs) the blimps reported sighting a periscope. This was where charges were dropped earlier in the afternoon. Air boils were reported in this spot and blowing tanks were again heard on our sound machine.

The final attack of the day was made on a non-sub target, the SC accompanying, both ships dropping one charge. (It has not been ascertained if the SC536 dropped more, but only one was seen to explode). The charge was dropped near the non sub target.

At 2010 the SC537 arrived on scene. The USSCG Bonham (NRPB in the radio logs) had been on or around the scene since 1738. These two reinforcements seemed to be reluctant to close to contact range and were usually well outside it. Difficulty (see radio logs) was experienced with these two vessels either because of their inexperience or unwillingness. During the night of the 21st when this vessel was attempting to make a routine sweep and search in the standard sweep formation, neither the SC537 nor the USSCG Bonham showed any understanding whatever and refused by their actions to cooperate. It is later understood that the Bonham had a top speed of 08.2 although she reported her speed to us as 12, and that she was under the supposition that she would blow herself up if she dropped charges. The SC537 had one contact which she reported during the following day and failed to prosecute it. The SC537 left the scene with her racks full of charges although the SC536 and the PC815 had exhausted all theirs. Echo range was never more than about 900 yards in this shallow water and despite orders neither vessel would close in to this with one exception, as noted in the attacks as of the following morning.

During the afternoon of May 19 the SC536 had brought us orders from Astoria Naval Station to secure and proceed on our original orders. We sought to protest these when they were received but evidence seemed to point to plenty of people being on the scene and so we secured reluctantly. We had no more than started away when Comwestseafron cancelled the Astoria Naval Station orders and ordered us to remain on scene. We ascertained responsibility and came back to the scene.

During the night vessels patrolled. The SC536 was ordered into an oil slick by the blimp and air bubbles were seen rising from this. (See radio log). This was in the seene of the final series of attacks, of the day.

On May 20, 1943, at 1140 the blimp made contact with its magnetic gear and dropped a smoke bomb. The USS PC815 came to general quarters from Condition II and set out to cerify the blimps contact.

It may here be remarked that the coordination between surface ships and the blimps was excellent. No attack was made, after the arrival of the blimps, without verification of sound contact by magnetic or magnetic contact by sound. Because her sound gear was not working properly (which fact she reported to us several times) the SC536 stood by for us to verify. This teamwork, the blmp's smoke flares, and the use of echo ranging gear saved us many times from losing contact.

N.B. Because we had three times found two sub targets on the previous day, we considered from her failure to surface that one sub was gone down in 90 fathoms. The other still had batteries well up for it made good speed in subsequent attacks (three to six knots).

The wide searching of the blimps and surface ships had ringed the area, blockading it.

An attack was made by the SC536 on a blimp magnetic contact about two hours before the USSPC815 started out as above. (See radio log). Having inoperative sound gear the SC536 used an oil slick and pat charges to explode on the bottom, letting go six charges in all.

On the blimp's magnetic contact and dropped smoke bombs, the USS PC815 relocated the contact and at 1305 made an attack on echo ranging equipment. This was Attack XII. The PC attacked on course 320 True

and found an extent of bearing of 14 degrees. The contact had been carefully investigated before attack and the submarine, evidently saving batteries, was awaiting our attack before it speeded up. (See Trace XI). It was moving directly away from our bows at a speed of about two knots during this long period of investigation while we kept bare steerage way behind it. When satisfied as to the identity of the target, having found screw noises, we came to attack speed as swiftly as possible and through the submarine was also heard to speed up (about five seconds after we were ahead all engines flank.) The Commanding Officer has checked this closely with the soundmen. The monotonous fluttering noise was not to be confused with our own screws. We laid a five charge pattern while the submarine was coming up to speed. Target was lost at 150 yards - 150 feet deep.

At the last moment it was seen that the submarine had right rudder on. Accordingly we drew off, as part of this attack and closed again when the chemical recorder was cut off as not registering distinct pings. Something, not yet established was wrong with this recorder until the following day and all attacks hereafter were made on indicator light, and sound. (An additional reason for this was the excellence of operation without recorder).

The PC815 swerved back, picked up contact, found the target going swiftly left (PC now on reverse to first attack course) and dropped two more charges set at 300 feet from the racks.

Contact was lost at 350 yards, which seems to indicate that the target had dived to that depth. Only a short time had elapsed between the two phases of this attack, so short that the PC curved around one of her K-gun charges in getting back to roll two more. The first charges exploded, by rough calculation, about 50 yards dead astern of the target, the next two probably came closer.

At 1342 another attack was made, Attack XIII. Ship was on a true course of 170. The target course was 160 True. A small lead angle was applied to the left and four charges were laid set at 300 feet.

The blimps were informed that the target, according to our sound data was heading inshore into shallower water. The destination was predicted and the blimp made magnetic contact in spot marked by explosion point for Attack XIV on chart.

It was at this time (1420, May 20, see PC radio log) that K-33 who was on the scene, gave command of all surface ships to the PC 815.

The PC approached the flare and smoke bomb where the blimp had made a magnetic contact and confirmed blimp's contact.

At 2000 the PC found a target under the blimp's flares. (see Attack XIV) Screw noises were heard while PC lay to listening. The range was 400. Bottom noises made the contact blurred but by changing angle of search a clear contact was made. The blimp again confirmed magnetic contact.

At 2003, on true course 095 this vessel came to attack speed, range 500 yards, using indicator light, sound and stop watch. Sub's course was found to be about 180 true, on which course the sub steadied. The shallowness of the water made it necessary to set charges for 75 feet. The PC came in and dropped charges ahead of the sub, then put her rudder hard right, pivoting around her starboard K-gun charge and rolled two from the racks set for 150 feet.

The blimp K-33 then dropped into the explosion pattern. This vessel having stretched other ships into line, attack was then made by them in rotation on their sound contact. It is not known how accurate were their contacts. The Bonham dropped on what she termed a poor contact. No record is available at this writing for the positions the vessels occupied in line or how many charges they dropped. The SC536 seems to have gotten her WEA I into operation for a short period here.

At 2034, when other vessels had cleared the attack area this vessel approached the area and carefully sought to regain contact despite the disturbed water. Just northwest of the depth charge slicks, at a distance of several hundred yards, a contact with loud screw noises was regained. All other vessels were to the south and west, most of them with engines stopped. K-33 dropped a flare to mark his magnetic contact which concurred with our sound contact. This vessel then took an attack course of 335 True and found herself on the port quarter of the submarine which was making about 3 knots. A lead angle of five degrees was applied and the charges dropped five seconds after the calculated time.

Blimps, and all surface vessels, searched the area without further contact.

The weather was still good but a slight wind had begun to spring up.

All during the following night, the USS PC815 kept the area swept as well as it could. The moonlight showed up an oil slick which we investigated, though the slick was too thin for samples.

N B.

It was very difficult trying to make the Bonham and the SC537 understand that the area must be patrolled with sound gear in an orderly fashion to blockade it. The patrol went from just south of Haystack Rock to north of Cape Lookout and back again. The SC536 was placed all the way ~~xxix~~ to seaward where the sub might be expected to surface.

A report that the sub had surfaced off Sand Lake (see Chart) caused all vessels except the Bonham to go flying north to that position. But before flank speed was attained the reported "sub" was reported as a fishing vessel. The SC536 was detached to investigate, the Bonham assigned a lower area where she would be out of the way and the patrol proceeded. For some time the SC537 was lost to us and it has not been established why she ~~disobeyed from~~ this ordered patrol.

N B.

~~XXXX

At 0704 no contact had been made. This was due to having lately maneuvered here to pick up a strange object, a small round ball laced with a line netting, which was floating here. Turbulence caused by our screws prevented echo ranging.

Suddenly a boil of orange colored oil, very thick, came to the surface immediately on our port bow. The Commanding Officer was aft where he had been trying to get the strange marker aboard with the help of his men.

The watch had been piped down for chow and due to the quietness of the area the opportunity had been taken to ease the barrel springs on the port 20MM and cock the starboard 20MM.

Ensign Wiemers, USNR, was Officer of the Deck, the Commanding Officer having had the conn since the beginning of the action on the morning of May 19th. Ensign Wiemers instantly sighted the oil boil and sounded General Quarters, shouting to gunners to get guns ready to fire.

The Commanding Officer came forward on the double and saw a second boil of orange oil rising on the other side of the first.

The soundman was loudly reporting that he heard tanks being blown on the port bow.

Every man on the bridge and flying bridge then saw the periscope, moving from right to left, rise up through the first oil boil to a height of about two feet. The barrel and sense of the instrument were unmistakable.

By efficient and swift work, Coates, C.C. SC2/c had gotten the forward 20MM loaded and Lacey, W.K., GM2/c had the Port 20MM ready to fire. This in some fifteen to twenty seconds. Both are expert gunners.

On the appearance of the periscope both gunners, Lacey and Coates, fired straight into the periscope, range about fifty yards. The periscope vanished in an explosion of 20MM bullets. It cannot be ascertained if the periscope was hit.

As the ship was dead in the water, charges could not be immediately dropped. The sub had been turning as if to get back under the ship. Only two charges were left to us, one loaded in a K-gun, on the wrong side.

We called ships to the area. There were so few charges left to any of us that we wished the next attack to be final and concerted.

The appearance of another orange oil boil ahead of us caused us to open out the range and gather speed and then search back for the contact. We could not establish contact though we searched the area in wide sweeps.

It was then reported to the Commanding Officer that both main engines would have to be stopped to replace relief valves. This was not unusual for depth charging and unaccustomed stress had showed up much slackness in the installation. Permission was granted to shut down one engine at a time for no longer than ten minutes.

During this period, 20 minutes after all engines had stopped, the soundman on duty, Beers, requested ~~his~~ new search orders and was given 360 degrees by way of novelty. His first ping found contact dead astern of us. The wind drifted us to starboard on the port bow and the contact remained stationary. We examined the contact and developed it. It was the submarine lying to, evidently having followed hard in our wake. The main engines were reported repaired.

We drew off, swiftly, and came to attack course. The first range was about 900 yards. When we came up to speed we cut in the chemical recorder. (See trace 18) (See chart Attack XV). The submarine turned to the left and gave us her port quarter and then nearly her port beam. Her screws were very plain. Change of bearing was to the left. Moderate doppler. A lead angle was applied (attack course 335 T,)to steady on 315 True. Charges set for 200 feet. Fired by recorder. Two charges. Contact lost at 250 yards.

A marked explosion met this attack concurrent with the depth charge explosions.

The target was then examined when regain contact procedure had been executed.

The blimp examined the target and confirmed. The SC536 was brought up to the scene and taken in behind us. We examined the target from a range of 520 yards.

At 1005 we started attack XVI. The SC536 was led astern of us. The first range at attack speed was 700. Attack speed 12 knots. The target was moving straight away from us on course 075. Her speed was very low.

Some difficulty was experienced in pinging through the sub wake and for this reason the chemical recorder was not cut in for this run.

There was no change of bearing. Target width was about six degrees. Moderate opening inclination.

On stop watch a range rate of 9 knots was established and the ship speed was 12 knots.

On whistle signal the SC laid her charges. The Commanding Officer of the PC then swarmed up on the signal bridge and saw that the SC was nearly 75 yards behind. The Commanding Officer then blew another signal when seventy five yards had run on his stop watch which was still running. The SC then laid a second barrage.

The first barrage exploded, by calculation, just astern of the submarine. The second barrage exploded on its bow as nearly as could be judged.

All the charges of the SC and the PC 815 had then been expended.

A search formation was taken up and no sign of the submarine could be found through 360 degrees.

A patrol formation was organized. The CG Bonham was secured after transferring her charges to the 537. A long blockade was formed around the area when no further contact could be gained.

The weather was getting bad with low visibility and a moderate sea running. Rain was coming down intermittently.

The PC ran up the coast on its sector and came upon the USS 778. The 778 had orders, according to Captain Barner, which permitted her to join the attack, but she protested very strongly against helping. She was finally brought into some sort of sweeping formation which she held raggedly, requesting continually to be allowed to be secured. She was led down to the spot of the last attack for she had fifty depth charges.

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Contact was regained on a questionable target in the area of the last attack (See Attack XVI). The contact was metallic, had a width of bearing of 15 degrees at 800 yards and was evidently on the bottom. There was a strong echo. The drifting of this ship made it appear for a moment that the target had a range rate of 1½ knots but this was shortly established as an effect of wind and current. The contact, whatever it was, showed no inclination and change. But it narrowed to five degrees at 400 yards while we circled it and then widened to fifteen as we came around it, narrowed again and widened again.

We gave the PC778 explicit directions on the contact. We were motionless in the water. We tried to pass the contact over to the PC778. She failed to get the contact, mainly because she was over a thousand yards from it and did not come up. At this depth (about thirty-two to thirty-six fathoms, with the rough sea) the contact could not be held at that distance. She failed to allow for drift and finally we recalled her to keep her from going aground and sent her on her away with her fifty charges. She would not part with any charges or any part of them although this presented no problem, the sea being calm enough her to allow an SC to take off an officer from her without the use of boats. Orders from Comnowestseafron came via another SC which said we could not have the 778.

In the late afternoon, just before sunset we ran a horizon patrol. The visibility was shutting down steadily but we wished to keep any sub, if any were left, from surfacing or running away.

Twelve hours after the last attack the area was still calm. The contact above mentioned was still there but we could do nothing about it. ~~The SC537 still had charges but evidently could not use her sound gear and we did not close.~~

At midnight we were secured by orders received from Comnowestseafron and returned to Astoria, arriving at daylight the morning of the 22nd of May.

Total time in contact with submarines was 55½ consecutive hours. (55 hours and 27 minutes)

Total time in area searching was 68½ hours. (68 hours and thirty-seven minutes.)

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Total depth charges expended by this vessel, 37.

Total casualties, 3, all very minor.

Materiel casualties, numerous, all minor, mainly to engines. The engines were repaired on the scene with the parts at hand whenever they broke down.

N B. Failure on the part of a gunner to properly assemble the parallelogram of the starboard 20MM (he reversed it) caused this gun to go off when pointed at the zenith and expend a full magazine, cutting away our antennaes. The gun was not at the time manned.

PERSONNEL CONDUCT REPORT

All personnel behaved with uniform attention to duty. Calmly and cheerfully, despite lack of sleep, all hands executed their required duties with efficiency.

No man is singled out for praise for to praise one would be to praise all.

No man is censured for no man required censure.

A report on the officers is submitted as follows:

Lieutenant T.S. Moulton, USNR, Executive Officer, handled Communications and Fire Control for the guns during the action. He showed zeal and imagination in the execution of duty and displayed his ability to receive and carry out orders promptly. He is considered a valuable officer, deserving of a command of his own.

Ensign D.E. Walker, USNR, Gunnery Officer, stayed hard by his post as Gunnery Officer and personally supervised the handling of depth charges. His feat of assembling 23 depth charges in 25 minutes, of having two ready in the racks two minutes after transfer was completely effected, deserves mention as a record. The firing lag of depth charges was cut down to a fractional amount by his timing and more than once his example caused such accurate dropping that two and, once, three charges, exploded simultaneously. There was no depth charge failure except for the structural firing charges which were already in the guns.

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Ensign M.E. Wiemers, USNR, First Lieutenant, carried out all orders efficiently and promptly. He was diligent in maintaining the materiel condition Affirm throughout the action. He spent long stretches of duty as Officer of the Deck and in this respect was especially trusted. His performance of duty had no highlights. It was uniformly dependable and quietly effective. He has proved himself to be an able officer, a good ship handler and, in all, a valuable part of this ship. An early promotion to Lieutenant (junior grade) is recommended for this officer.

SUMMARY

N.B. When this ship returned to port under the orders of Comnowestseafront, she was received with considerable skepticism. Her records had not been examined, her crew had not been questioned and no qualified report had been made.

This ship was handicapped by the lack of outside aid from anti-submarine warfare officers. The only anti-submarine warfare officer present being Lieutenant (junior grade) Kroepke of the SC536. This officer, naturally able, and trained in ASW was our biggest help while in command of the SC536.

N.B. When the regular commanding officer of that ship was brought to it by the PC778, cooperation from that direction ceased.

The captains of K-39 and K-33 were diligent, particularly the latter whenever he assumed command, but they showed a deep blank on the usual knowledge of ASW one might expect of them. They did, however, beautiful coordination work when cooperating with surface ships.

The radio intercepts from shore stations near the scene were garbled because the blimps operated on 5 watts and could not reach. Therefore only a fragment of their orders, confirmations, etc. reached shore stations. The garbled conditions of such logs seemed to be due to static. This garble led to erroneous opinions.

The Astoria Naval Station did all possible to aid. Additional ammunition was not sent because the bar was running too high after the first load of 23 charges was delivered.

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The U.S.S. PC815 was manned by S.C.T.C. trained officers and petty officers, experienced in handling ASW vessels or at least closely instructed.

The sound equipment of the U.S.S. PC815 is QCS and was easily the best, probably the only, efficient sound gear on the scene, well cared for and well-manned.

All attack conning was done by the Commanding Officer as well as all usual conning during the period of attacks, search and patrol. With due allowance for lack of rest, all attacks were conducted and operated on standard procedure on the doctrine of Fleet Sound School, Key West, Florida.

This vessel appreciates the favor of Comnowestseafron for allowing it to remain on the scene and later, for the interview.

CLAIM

It is specifically claimed that one submarine presumably Japanese, possibly a mine-layer, was damaged beyond ability to leave the scene and that one submarine, presumably Japanese, possibly a mine layer, was damaged beyond ability to return to its base.

This vessel has requested permission to search for possible wrecks on the bottom to bouy them to be swept for or dived for. It is the opinion of this vessel that at least one wreck may be found, near the scene of the last attacks for in the ~~in the~~ vicinity of attacks VII, VIII, and IX, in 92 fathoms of water. Due to stress of attack or later attempts to get away, these positions may not mark, exactly, the locality of any wreck.

This vessel wishes no credit for itself. It was built to hunt submarines. Its people were trained to hunt submarines. Although exceeding its orders originally by attacking the first contact, this vessel feels only that it has done the job for which it was intended and stands ready to do that job again.

N.B.

L. Ron Hubbard
Lieutenant, D-V(S), USNR
Commanding U.S.S. PC815

19

# SECRET

IN REPLY REFER
TO NO.

U. S. S. PC-815

May 25, 1943.

From: The Executive Officer.
To : The Commanding Officer.

Subject: Report, After Battle.

Reference: (a) Article 948, U.S. Navy Regulations, 1920.

1. In accordance with reference (a), the following is submitted.

2. Details of the action, having been more than adequately covered in the Battle Report are not discussed, except to corroborate.

3. From listening to sound gear, with which the Executive Officer has had considerable experience, from surface evidences seen personally, such as boils produced by blowing of tanks, quantities of oil, and the general character of the action itself, the following conclusions are drawn:

(1) During the period from 0300, Tuesday, April 18, 1943, until 2400, Friday, April 21, 1943, the U.S.S. P.C. 815 fought two submarines, presumably Japanese.

(2) That one of them was definitely sunk, beyond doubt.

(3) That the second was damaged beyond repair and may therefore be considered as not capable of returning to Japanese territory.

4. It is recommended that each officer, junior to myself, and each enlisted man, have placed in his record a letter of commendation for his conduct in this action; considering coolness, stamina and general ability. The Executive Officer feels no particular person is outstanding beyond any other.

5. No comments of a censuring nature are made.

Thomas S. Moulton

THOMAS S. MOULTON.

ENCLOSURE (D)

97

# SECRET

IN REPLY REFER
TO NO.

U. S. S. PC-815

GUNNERY LOG

L.W.T. Wednesday, 19 May, 1943

0344 - Fired both K-guns—setting 75 feet
Rolled three from racks—settings were 2 at 100 feet and one at 50 feet

0357 - Fired both K-guns—setting 150 feet
Rolled two from racks—settings at 200 feet

0422 - Fired both K-guns—settings at 200 feet

0450 - Fired all guns at object on surface

0500 - Fired all guns at object on surface

0520 -Rolled one from racks—settings at 150 feet

0526 - Rolled one from racks—setting at 150 feet

0545 - Rolled one from racks—setting at 150 feet
This expended all our depth charges.

1700 - C. G. C. 78-302 came alongside to give us 23 complete depth charges

1850 - Rolled one from racks—setting at 150 feet

THURSDAY, 20 May 1943

1305 - Fired two from K-guns—setting at 300 feet
Rolled four from racks—settings at 300 feet

1342 - Fired two from K-guns—settings at 300 feet
Rolled two from racks—settings at 300 feet

1601 - Fired two from K-guns—settings at 75 feet
Rolled one from racks—setting at 75 feet

2003 - Fired two from K-guns—settings at 75 feet
Rolled one from racks—setting at 75 feet

2006 - Rolled two from racks—setting at 150 feet

2034 - Fired two from K-guns—settings at 150 feet

SECRET

IN REPLY REFER
TO NO.

U. S. S. PC-815

GUNNERY LOG CONTINUED

LWT FRIDAY, 21 May 1943

0704 - Opened fire from all guns at periscope in the center of oil boil.
Continued firing until the periscope disappeared.

0805 - Fired port K-gun—settings at 179 feet
Rolled one from racks—setting at 179 feet

AMMUNITION INVENTORY

A full allowance of ammunition was on hand when this vessel sailed from Astoria on May 18, 1943 in all respects except depth charges.

This vessel had strongly requested its full allowance of depth charges but received only fourteen, two of which were structural firing charges. It is believed that this was no fault of this naval station but came about through a lack of supply from Navy Yard Puget Sound or wherever this naval station receives it charges and ordnance. There were no more depth charges than this to be given to this vessel. This station was most generous with arbors.

D.E. Walker
D.E. Walker
Ensign, USNR
Gunnery Officer, USS PC815

ENCLOSURE (E)

09

NAVAL SECTION BASE
ASTORIA, OREGON

Subject: Operation of P.C. 815 -
Sanitation
Engineering Dept

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On the night of the 2nd to the 3rd inst. P.C. 815 suspended operations in connection with the above subject, up to that time the ship had been operating with no known difficulties.

On the morning of the 3rd inst. it was discovered that the watches had ceased functioning, and remained so for four nights and three days, without so much as the passing of a flashlight.

J. L. Daniels
Fireman 1st Class U.S.N.
U.S.S. P.C. 815

End (1)

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ENCLOSURE (H)

NAVAL SECTION BASE
ASTORIA, OREGON

93.

# SECRET

PERSONNEL

THE CREWS REACTION DURING GENERAL QUARTERS PROVED TO BE VERY SATISFACTORY. WHEN GENERAL QUARTERS SOUNDED THE CREW WAS TO THEIR BATTLE STATIONS AS WHAT THE OLD NAVY SAYING IS (ON THE DOUBLE).

THE CREW AT ALL TIMES WAS CALM AND KNEW THEIR STATIONS TO THE "T". DURING THE ALARM FOR ACTION THE CREW IN ITSELF WAS ALWAYS WHERE THEY SHOULD BE (AT THEIR GENERAL QUARTERS STATION) WHERE THE CAPTAIN DESIGNATED THAT THEY SHOULD BE. THE CREW AS THE CAPTAIN ONCE DESIGNATED IS A VERY LIVELY, SENSIBLE AND VERY EFFECIENT CREW.

BUT ABOVE ALL THE CREW, EACH AND EVERY MAN LOOKS UP TO AND RESPECTS THE CAPTAIN, L. RON HUBBARD AND EVERYTHING IN EVERY WAY THAT THE MEN SHOULD RESPECT A LEADER. AND I MIGHT ADD THAT THE CREW THINKS THAT HE IS ONE OF THE BEST LEADERS OF ANY SHIP AFLOAT.

EVEN WITHOUT SLEEP FOR ABOUT THREE DAYS THE OFFICERS AND THE MEN OF THE CREW OF PC 815 WERE VERY EFFECIENT AND KNEW THEIR JOBS AT ALL TIMES. AS FAR AS EXCITABILITY AMONG THE MEN AND OFFICERS OF THE PC 815 IN ORDINARY STEAMING CONDITIONS OR IN ACTION THEY DON'T KNOW THAT IT EVEN EXISTS.

R. W. MALLOY RM3C.

GH

**SECRET**

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT
RADIO

IN GENERAL WE HAD VERY GOOD RECEPTION, EXCEPT FROM SECTION 4 ASTORIA. WE INFORMED OUR TWO SC'S AND THE NAVY BLIMP K-33 AND K-39 OVER VOICE. OUR LOG BOOK WAS KEPT UP AS GOOD AS POSSIBLE, EXCEPT WHEN WE WERE IN THE PILOT HOUSE AND DID NOT HAVE A TYPERWRITER AVAILABLE. WE GAVE ORDERS FROM THE PILOT HOUSE FOR ABOUT 3 HOURS. OUR SHIP WAS IN CHARGE AND ACTED AS FLAG SHIP TO THE OTHERS. EITHER THE K-39 OR K-33 GAVE US GENERAL ORDERS. AT EVERY TIME ONE OF THE BLIMPS WOULD MAKE A MAGNETIC CONTACT THEY WOULD REPORT EITHER US OR ONE OF THE SC'S TO INVESTAGATE. WHEN WE WOULD GET A CONTACT WE WOULD REPORT TO THE BLIMP. WE HAD VONSIDERABLE TROUBLE GETTING THE TWO SC'S TO UNDER-STAND OUR BATTLE TACTICS. OUR LOG BOOK IS NOT IN GOOD ORDER AS THERE WAS ONLY ONE RADIO MAN ON WATCH AND AT TIMES WE WERE SENDING AND RECIEVING AS FAST AS POSSIBLE. SOME OF THE CODE MESSAGES WE RECIEVED FROM SECTION 4 HAD LOTS OF INTERFERENCE FROM STATIC AND TELEPHONE TALKERS. WE TOLD THE SC 536 TO BE FLAG SHIP WHEN WE LEFT FOR ASTORIA. WE OPERATED ON 3009 KCS AND SENT TO NPC 4 ON 2196 FOR A FEW MINUTES, OTHERWISE ALL OUR COMMUNICATIONS WAS HANDLED ON 3009. AS FAR AS SIGNAL COMMUNICATIONS WAS CONCERNED, THEY DID A VERY FINE JOB. SOMETIMES THEY WOULD HAVE SOME TROUBLE GETTING A ROGER ON SOME OF THE MESSAGES BUT WAS BECAUSE OF CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM.

IN ALL I THINK OUR COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT DID A VERY GOOD JOB TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THAT IT WAS PRACTICALLY THE FIRST ACTUAL EXPERIENCE FOR SOME OF THEM.

Harley Berryman SM 3/c

~~CERTIFIED TRUE COPY~~
(original)

- (-)

95

SECRET

May 22, 1943

On May 19, 1943, while at my station of first loader of the 3 inch gun, at General Quarters, I saw air bubbles on the surface some distance off our starboard quarter. This was after a run had been made over that area. Subsequent to that time, I saw two more such boils, though I am unable to remember the exact time of either.

While the P.C. 815 was in Portland many drills were called for by Captain Hubbard, foremost of which was General Quarters Drills. This short though thorough training of the crew in manning its stations promptly, proved its worth in our recent contact with the enemy. Every man on board, whether an old hand or a newcomer, showed his eagerness to cooperate with our commanding officer, and thus make this a fighting ship.

E. R. Hackman
S 1/c U.S.N.R.

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**SECRET**

Original contact made by Grover, H. So.M. 3/c
Coordination on this run was very good. High speed made it very hard to keep in beam. Also working with relative bearing was a hinderance.

Sound gear operation during this action was exceedingly good. Sound conditions were bad during the largest part of patrol.
Outstanding work was done on sound gear by Beers, P.A. So M 3/c who was exceedingly good at maintaining contact under very adverse conditions.

Keeping a bearing on bridge was good. We are sound excited at attack. Range & bearing was invaluable in maintaining contact.

Commands on several attacks and contact position. Depth and depth charges were helpful in maintaining contact.

Sound recorder was out of operation during several attacks.

Lowell Wick S.M. 1/c

Enclosure

97.

**SECRET**

UNITED STATES NAVY

On the Morning of May 21, I was in my bunk aft, G.Q. sounded and i went to my battle station which was the Port 20 M. M. known as gun 220, as i was coming up ladder, Mr Reimer ordered fire at periscope, i aimed my gun at 325° at about 150 yds, there i saw large bubles coming up, than about 2 sec later a large oil ring about 10 yards wide, just inside of oil ring was a periscope moving thru oil spot, i fired 60 rounds of 20 m m at it, with 58 shots on the mark, the first 2 shots a little high, the

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SECRET

UNITED STATES NAVY

periscope moved another 7 or 8 yds
and ~~the~~ was gone, as all 58 shots
blurred my view if I shot it off
or they pulled it down.

Clair Carl Coates S.C. 3/c

Encl (K-6)

99.

From - Hombaspec SECRET BM 1/c

Personal impression of the readiness of ship & Crew for action as required during enemy engagement.

The Crew of the PC 815 were quick to act and displayed a remarkable Cooperative spirit in their effort to Combat the enemy. In my manner of thinking there was not a man present who did not fail to behave as he should in this. Perhaps for the majority, their first actual Contact with the enemy

The PC 815 the liking

100.
101.

sufficient SECRET number of
depth charges, damaged
the fighting ability her
Class of Vessel is reported
to Bossies.

G.S. Hornbogen
Bm1/c

101.

# SECRET

Review of Action of May 19-21, 1943

Beginning with the first contact at 0230 May 19, 1943, there was almost continous contact until late that afternoon. Although never having heard a real contact on a live sub before, the pings and screw noises heard over our sound gear corresponded to the phonograph records of runs on live subs used at SCTC.

After the first depth charge pattern was layed, the men acted as if it was a routine matter on other runs.

During the first day, in fact after the first run, when I heard the sound gear operating, it was a certainty in my mind that there was a sub in the vicinity especially after hearing the screw noises, as we were dead in the water and no ships in sight from which they could come.

The attacks were all made on underwater contacts verified by magnetic contacts from the blimps. On the afternoon of the first day air boils were sighted, with a blimp sighting a periscope late in the afternoon. Having expended all our depth charges it was disgusting to me with the contacts so clear that nothing could be done about it.

On the morning of the twenty first while standing my regular watch and not having had contact for some time, everything was beginning to get rather dull when a small cork marker was sighted which we attempted to pick up for nothing better to do. After steaming ahead and back for some time and not succeeding in picking the marker up, we continued to steam ahead slowly when suddenly a large boil of oil came to the surface about fifty yards off our port bow followed by a periscope seen by men at various stations at which time our guns opened fire. Being so close it was impossible to make sound contact, while steaming away so as to regain contact another oil boil came to the surface directly in line with the first one so a again the range was opened, contact made and a pattern of depth charges layed after which contact could not be regained, the sub apparently having gone to the bottom or out of sounding range.

(M.E. Wiemers)

U.S.S. USS
1st Lieut, USNRF

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# SECRET

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE SOME THAT I OBSERVED FROM MY BATTLE STATION NEAR THE DEPTH CHARGE RACKS AND K-GUNS AT ALL GENERAL QUARTERS DURING THE DAYS OF MAY 19, 20, AND 21. AT SOME OTHER TIMES I WAS ON THE BRIDGE NEAR THE SOUND STACK WHILE WE HAD CONTACTS.

EARLY IN THE MORNING OF 19 MAY AFTER SEVERAL REPEATED RUNS AN OIL SLICK WAS OBSERVED ANDY BY USE OF A RAGE SOME OF THE OBSERVED OIL WAS BROUGHT ABOARD TO BE VERIFIED. THROUGHOUT THE DAY MANY BOILS OF AIR BUBBLES WERE OBSERVED AS WELL AS OIL AND THEY WERE DISTINCTLY DIFFERENT FROM ANY WHITECAPS.

AT VARIOUS TIMES PROPELLOR NOISES WERE HEARD ON THE SOUND GEAR. ALTHOUGH INEXPERIENCED IN THE ACTUAL USE OF SOUNDGEAR THERE WAS NO QUESTION ABOUT THE SOUNDS BEING PROPELLOR NOISES. AT DIFFERENT TIMES THE CONTACT DID NOT CHANGE ITS BEARING THEN SUDDENLY DIED OUT TO BE PICKED UP AGAIN ON A DIFFERENT BEARING. THIS WAS EVIDENCE IN MY MIND THAT IT WAS A SUBMARINE AND NOT SOME OBJECT THAT HAD SUNK INTO THE WATER.

ON THE MORNING OF 21 MAY GENERAL QUARTERS WAS SOUNDED AND AS I CAME TOPSIDE FROM MY QUARTERS SHOTS FROM THE 20MM GUNS WERE BEING FIRED AT AN OIL BOIL ABOUT 50 OR 75 YARDS OFF THE PORT BOW. AFTER A FEW SHOTS THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OFF ANY FLOATING OBJECT AND XXXXXXXXX WHAT WAS DEFINITELY DETERMINED TO BE THE PERISCOPE OF A SUBMARINE HAD COMPLETELY DISAPPEAREL. HAD THAT OBJECT BEEN A FLOATING OBJECT ON THE SURFACE OF THE WATER IT WOULD NOT HAVE SUNK AFTER A FEW SHOTS HAD BEEN FIRED FROM THE 20MM GUNS.

I THINK A FEW COMMENTS ON THE REACTIONS AND EFFECIENCY OF THE CREW A CERTAINLY IN LINE HERE. FOR A GROUP OF MEN THAT HAVE NOT WORKED TOGETHER ANY MORE THAN THEY HAVE I FEEL THAT SOME BEAUTIFUL TEAMWORK WAS DISPLAYED. AFTER THE FIRST FEW HOURS WHEN EVERYONE WAS CONVINCED THAT WE REALLY HAD A SUBMARINE CORNERED BENEATH US EVERY REALLY GOT IN THERE AND STARTED WORKING TIRELESSLY. THERE WERE TIMES WHEN YOU KNEW THAT SOME OF THE FELLOWS WERE ABOUT REALLY TO DROP FROM EXHAUSTION AND EXCITEMENT BUT NEVERTHELESS THEY WERE STILL GIVING THEIR ALL IN AN ATTEMPT TO SINK THAT SUB.

D E Walker

D. E. WALKER
ENSIGN, D(V)G, USNR

# SECRET

U.S.S. PC 815

MAY 22, 1943

FROM: THE PHARMACIST MATE.
TO: THE COMMANDING OFFICER.

SUBJECT: PERSONEL IMPRESSIONS OF THE SHIP'S CREW DURING RECENT ENEMY ENGAGEMENT.

1. BETWEEN MAY 19 AND MAY 21 WE ATTACKED ENEMY SUBMARINES OFF THE COAST OF OREGON. CONTACT WAS MADE AT ABOUT 0230 ON THE MORNING OF THE 19TH. BUT DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE FIRST ENGAGEMENT WAS MADE SO EARILY IN THE MORNING, AND THIS WAS FOR THE MAJORITY OF THE MEN THEIR FIRST ACTUAL CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY, THE MEN ON THE WHOLE CONDUCTED THEMSELVES IN A MOST EXAMPLATORY MANNER. THERE WAS DISPLAYED BY THE OFFICERS AND MEN ALIKE A MOST REMARKABLE SPIRIT OF COMRADESHIP AND TEAMWORK. WE DID NOT HAVE THE USUAL DISPLAYAL OF DRAMATIZED AND SELF-GLORIFIED SELFSACRIFCE; BUT, ON THE CONTRARY, ALL HANDS CARRIED ON THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE AFFAIR AS THO THIS SORT OF THING HAD HAPPENED EVERDAY OF THEIR LIVES, AND THAT THEY WERE MORE THAN READY TO FIGHT THE ENEMY NO MATTER WHAT THE ODDS.

2. ASSUMING THE PERSPECTIVE OF A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MED. DEPT. ON THE ACTIONS OF THE PERSONNEL DURING THIS ENGAGEMENT, IT IS MY UNBIASED OPINION THAT THE MORAL OF THE MEN DURING THE SUBJECT ACTION WAS AT ITS HIGHEST, AND EVEN AFTER THE SHIP HAD RETURNED TO PORT IT STILL MAINTAIND THAT STANDARD THAT SPEAKS SO WELL OF A SHIP'S CAPTAIN. THERE WERE MANIFESTED BUT ONE OR TWO CASES OF SO CALLED "WAR NEUROSIS." AND TO ISOLATE THOSE TWO CASES ONE WOULD HAVE HAD TO OBSERVE VERY CLOSELY, FOR THESE MEN CARRIED ON VERY WELL DESPITE THEIR MENTAL HANDICAP. JUDGING BY THE MANIFESTED REACTIONS OF THE PERSONNEL OF THIS VESSEL DURING THE AFOREMENTIONED ACTION AGAINST THE ENEMY, I WOULD SAY THAT THE CREW OF THIS SHIP ARE IN MOST RESPECTS READY TO MEET THE ENEMY WHEN AND WHEREVER NECESSARY.

F. W. SMITH, CPHM(AA), USN.

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Enclosure (1)

Encl (1) (1)

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Encl(I) (3)

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Encl (I) (4)